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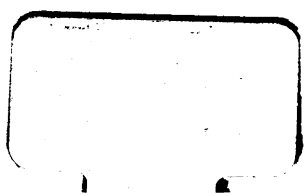

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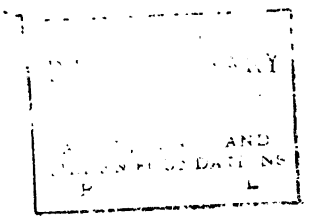

JAMES EPHRAIM McGIRT.

AVENGING THE MAINE, A DRUNKEN A. B., AND OTHER POEMS.

BY

JAMES EPHRAIM McGIRT.

SECOND ENLARGED EDITION.

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PREFACE.

I do not deem it necessary to write a preface to these few poems, but, somehow, I have a tender feeling for this little book that is about to be sent out into the world, to bear such an humble burden as my feeble thought. I do not know, but I believe that if this book could speak it would sternly refuse to go on such an humble mission; but, since I have imposed upon it this duty, knowing the many censuring critics it may have to encounter, I believe it my duty to say a word, for the very book's sake, that may cause the censuring tongue of man to wag less swiftly

First, I must say that these poems were written under very unfavorable circumstances. Dignity may not allow me to explain, but I will say that they were composed during my leisure time, which has been limited. I say *leisure* time—no, I have none; I should have said *sacrificed* time, time when the body was almost exhausted from manual labor, when recreation was greatly needed; and you who know what a struggle the mind has battling with an exhausted body in trying to perform such a task as this can easily allow for this feeble result. The mind can not work when the body is exhausted, and I assure you that I would not have written one line had Nature not forced me to do so. Often at my work-bench, when I thought greater speed was needed to finish my daily task,

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these poems—or whatever you may call them.—would flash into my mind and I would be restless to sketch them upon paper that I might retain them until my day's work was done. Sometimes I could find it convenient to do so, sometimes I could not. and when I would fail to sketch them. at night the muse would not return Thus you can understand why I have not written more.

I must also state that I am conscious of the fact that this work does not come up to the standard work of the mighty masters of poetry. but you need not censure me—it is not my fault. The muse has not yet taught me to sing as they. Had she given me the same power, do you not think I would have written?

Moreover, I am just beginning, and perhaps she does not care to intrust me with the whole art at once: she may have thought it best to give me one talent first that she might see how I would use it, and I assure you that I think I should have done better. Often I have thought of laying these few poems aside and not giving any to the public until I became able to write as good poems as other poets. I publish them because I do not wish the muse to find me with my one talent buried when she comes to make up her jewels and reward her servants. She might serve me as his lord did the other one-talented servant we read of in the Bible.

JAMES EPHRAIM McGIRT.

Greensboro, N C,
August 17, 1899

EXPLAINING DIALECT POEMS.

You may wonder why the dialect words in my humorous poems are so few compared with those in other dialect poems, but if you will notice such characters as I have portrayed you will find, as I have, that the most illiterate persons, living now among so many who are cultured, do not speak the whole dialect but speak correctly one half of their words. So I have written just as the masses impressed me.

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AVENGING THE MAINE.

Sing, O Muse! the avenging of the Maine,
The direful woes, the fate of Spain.
A heinous deed to our ship they wrought,
Untimely death to our crew they brought.
Our soldiers' valor forever tell,
Who for revenge both fought and fell;
Volcanic boats over the water went,
The burning revenge from them was sent.
Shafter's army, pray tell me all
Who died bravely rallying to the call?
What of the Negroes in the band,
Did they scatter or did they stand?

To this question I'll answer brief,
They fought like demons without a chief.
I'll ever sing of the memorable day
When negro valor was brought into play;
In the hottest battle their captain died,
They did not scatter, "Onward they cried."
Their eyes on victory intensely fixed,
Negro and white blood that day flowed mixed.
These are the first to embark on land,
There were no cowards in this band;

When the story you shall hear
They to you will ever seem dear.

Hold of her harp the muse then takes,
A minor chord on it she makes;
All sit quietly curious to hear,
But from her eye there falls a tear;
Her voice was choked, her bosom with sorrow
did swell,
As from the strings her fingers fell.
Over her face there came a frown,
She took a seat upon the ground,
Then to her side they quickly went;
From her breast a groan she sent.
Within our arms we held her head
And to the muse we softly said:
"Tell us, O Muse! what gives thee grief,
And if we can, we'll give relief?"

From her breast again she sighed,
With throbbing voice to us replied,
"The story which you urge to hear
None can tell without a tear,
Grief to you this tale will bring
If I in poetry play and sing.
I can not sing the grievous woes
I'll tell the story to you in prose;
Now you all must listen with care

If the story you would hear;
From the beginning I'll now relate
That coming ages may know the fate.

In the land of Cuba there's a nation brave,
Whom the cruel Spaniards held as slaves.
One night their leaders in conference met
To see if their freedom they could get.
They the yoke of slavery bore
Till their shoulders had galded sore.
Maceo, the first to take the stand,
He was the leader of the band;
Unto them all he did declare
He could no longer slavery bear.
A bill to Spain he sent to see
If they would set the Cubans free;
And when the bill to Spain was sent
Becoming enraged the bill they rent.

To the soldiers she was heard to tell—
"Go! Murder the Cubans, if they rebel."
Unto them all she gave command
To bring the leaders of the band.
The Cuban leaders they could not get,
There was a skirmish when they met;
When they had driven the leaders away,
The women and children they would slay

They murdered th' babes that knew no harm—
They stabbed them in their mothers' arms.
While killing all by sword they could,
From others they withheld the food,
To utterly starve a Cuban race.
To us it seemed a sad disgrace;
The freedom of Cuba then was our plea.

We called upon our General Lee,
Our beloved general to Cuba we sent
To see what the cruel Spaniards meant.
Over we sent our best ship "Maine."
Spain to us had done the same;
Both were sent in truce's name.
Our ship in Havana's harbor stood;
But Spain was eager for our blood.
And in the secret of the night
On us explodes a dynamite;
And while her crew were fast asleep,
Some were hurled to the mighty deep.
The ship went down beneath the wave
Before we could our sailors save.
I can not picture the fearful sight,
Nor bear to think of the dreadful night,
When they performed the cruel deed;
Unless my heart is made to bleed.

Now the story you may abhor;
I've told the causes of the war.
The news was sent by the swiftest speed,
Announcing the Spaniard's cruel deed.
Sorrow and anger to us it brought,
To hear of the deed the Spaniards wrought.
Over the world a clamor rose,
And all the world that clamor knows;
Some were counting up the cost,
Others wailing over the lost.
Revenge! Revenge! our voices rang;
On to war was the song we sang.
To the White House we quickly went
To ask war of our President.
In the Senate, war was the cry,
Our President did not comply;

To all of us he would rise and say:
"To go to war is more than play."
The bill for war he would declare,
He could not sign till he prepare.
Soon his plans had been well made,
The cry for war he at once obeyed.
A number of men he first did ask.
To get them did not seem a task,
And every time a call was made,
Our loyal sons at once obeyed.
Of the brave heroes I now will tell,

Who for vengeance fought and fell:
Dewey and Sampson first I'll sing,
On my harp their names shall ring.
They first for vengeance made their way;
The woe of Spain began that day;
It seemed as He, the God Supreme,—
Down from His throne viewed all the scenes;—
The deed of Spain He did abhor,

And lent us aid throughout the war.
With every fleet a guard was sent
To keep us safe where'r we went;
Around the mines to show us a path,
And manage the guns that hurled our wrath.
The aid to us was beyond cost;
Not a boat of ours was lost.
Hobson's valor must not be untold;
'Twas brave as any of the fold
The deed that made for him a name,
And I a muse must sing his fame,
To block th' Spaniard's escaping way,
He sank th' Merrimac into th' bay.
The deed performed, his crew to save;
Their names I've placed among the brave.
The deed showed Sampson a safe way
To reach the port, Santiago Bay
He reached; the woe had begun,
That would not cease 'till the victory was won.

THE MEMORY OF MACEO.

Ye men of Cuba, to you I call,
Mourn for your leader, place crape on the wall;
Tell the young children that play at your feet
Of the wonderful General that has fallen to sleep.

Sleep! yes in the graveyard he lies;
But his spirit's sweetly resting, beyond the skies.

We think of his work, we say he was grand;
Why not let for him a monument stand;
One that will reach to the ethereal blue,
Bearing the name Maceo, will do.

Dear Maceo, our hearts pine for thee!
For whom thou died, can say we are free.

SIEGE OF MANILA.

Just a few miles from Manila Bay
Near the close of a summer day,
When the sun was flooding with gold the west,
Our fleet was ordered to stop and rest.
After the regular meal was served,
Each returned to the usual place;
All stood gazing with mute and awe
Into the fiery dome of space,
Watching the stars steady blaze
As they down upon us gaze.

I will never forget the night
All the stars were shining bright,
A full orbed moon hung in the west
Watching to see the great contest;
The wind was of a steady gale,
It was a pleasant night to sail;
The ocean waves were rolling along
Pealing forth their mournful song.

Soon from the ocean a mist arose
As Nature's starry book close.
After another night had passed
And the morn was coming fast.

But before the gleam of day
We sailed to take Manila Bay;
Soon Manila revealed in sight,
From the window gleamed light;
When we saw the deadly guns—
O'er our fleet a stillness comes—
Each stood waiting by his gun,
Perfect stillness, not a breath.
An instant may bring sudden death.
Like a hero they did stand,
Waiting to hear the "fire" command;
The mist that from the ocean rose
Hid us from our Spanish foes.
When the enemy did not blast
Through our fleet a whisper passed.

Fortune it seems is on our side,
We have entered and are not spied;
By the fort we began to start,
But a distance we sailed apart,
One by one by the guns we stole
As a wolf in a shepherd s fold;
All our fleet had safely passed,
Except McCulloch which was the last.
Fortune would not it pass;
In its furnace occurred a wreck.
And sparks went flying from its stack.

The sparks that from the stack did fly
Met at once the fortman's eye;
Through glasses they began to peep,
To their surprise they spied our fleet.
A cry of terror! The signal rung,
Shells came blazing from their guns
Before an instant could have passed
Around us shells were falling fast;
The mines in vain they did explore,
But we were safe around her shore.

Our captain gave command to fire
Which seemed to be our soul's desire;
Before the word he could hardly speak,
Shells went blazing from all our fleet;
We were burning with hatred ire,
We filled the air with shells and fire.

While the battle was raging high
And glowing shells were seen to fly,
Dewey back through memory gazed—
Saw the Maine, became enraged;
With his dazzling sword in hand
Whirling it high, he gave command.
Fury came blazing from his eye
With thundering voice was heard the cry:
"Remember the Maine, Speed! Haste!
Careful boys, no shells to waste."

They remembered. their blood did run;
They hurled revenge through every gun
Our boats like burning Vesuvius seemed,
From our guns shells poured in streams.
Directed by an immortal eve
Not a strayward shell did fly;
Each of the shells from the gun that went
Performed the mission on which it was sent.
Our captain takes his glass in hand
And over the battle begins to scan:
"Stop the guns," he quickly cries,
"Fortune now is on our side,
Spain's whole fleet is in a blaze,
Sinking fast beneath the waves."
When this command to us was given,
Three haughty cheers went up to heaven;
When the sun sent up her beam,
Not a Spanish boat was seen;
But the whole Manila fleet
Were buried in the mighty deep.

SIEGE OF SANTIAGO.

Here Spain's dreaded host did stand,
The strongest fort in all the land;
When we entered into the bay
The eves of the world were turned that way,
Watching breathless, eager to see
What the issue of the fight would be.
Morro Castle was standing bold,
As it did in days of old.
Its deadly guns seemed to say,
"I'll hold the entrance of the way."
A pleasant morning, a Sabbath day.

We were resting within the bay,
Soon our day of peace did change.
It proved a day for our revenge.
Sampson's heart did eager yearn
Cevera's secret plans to learn;
Schley, he sent to the upper shore
If the plans he might explore.
This somehow seems divine,
He sailed just at the proper time;
On their way to their surprise,
Two coming vessels met their eyes.

Through glasses we began to peep,
Behold! It was Cevera's fleet,
Rushing toward us in swiftest speed;
Two fierce boats were in the lead:
"Cevera's escaping!" Schley cried.
He rang the signal far and wide;
But before the story he could tell
The air was filled with fire and shell,
Shells that were not sent in vain;
It proved a direful fate to Spain.
Their ships in flames of fire were blazed—

Till we on them in pity gazed,
And sent a boat in chivalry's name
To save them from the burning flame.
Their direful fate's too great to tell,
To them it proved a fiery hell.
Schley gazing out from left to right,
To him it seemed a dreadful sight;
Ships were blazing on every side,
"We have revenge," he quickly cried.
Many Spaniards on that day
Were burned and buried in the bay.

THE STARS AND STRIPES SHALL NEVER TRAIL THE DUST.

'Tis a colored captain's story
That was told to Uncle Sam,
He was mustered out because the war was o'er;
He had borne his honor bravelv
And the victory he had won,
He came to deliver up the flag he bore.

He was standing at the White House
With the Stars and Stripes in hand,
His sword and uniform with gore were red;
A bullet had pierced his body,
Yet it had not caused his death,
As he gave to him the flag he slowly said:

"Uncle Sam, here is Old Glory,
That you trusted to my care,
Through the hottest I have ever held my trust;
Though the bullets have rent my body,
Yet to you I can truly say,
That the Stars and Stripes have never trailed the dust.'"

CHORUS.

No, the Stars and Stripes shall never trail the dust
while I live,
But shall ever wave untarnished o er the free;
Yes, the shells may rend my body,
And may death come if it must,
But the Stars and Stripes shall never trail the dust.

Uncle Sam then took the flag
And gazed into the Hero's face;
He said, "My son, you're black, but still you're a
man;"
On his breast he placed a medal,
And he said remember me;
To forget you; no, my boy, I never can!

Son, your Uncle knows no color,
Neither any party line;
The call I made was simply for the brave.
And you loving soldiers heard me
And rallied to the call,
And my country from destruction you have saved.

I saw you darkies bear the flag
Through shells up San Juan Hill,
I saw the Spaniards from your valor flee;

And the Stars and Stripes were waving
O'er Morro Castle bold;
They are waving now in Cuba o'er the free.

CHORUS.

No, the Stars and Stripes shall never trail the dust
while I live;
But shall ever wave untarnished o'er the free:
Yes, the shells may rend my body
And may death come if it must;
But the Stars and Stripes shall never trail the dust

SLAVERY.

Oh slavery! why wast thou so cruel,
So cursed and so black;
To leave your cruel footprints
Upon our Father's back.

Why did you not beat him,
And say to him, depart?
Why wast thou so cruel
As to crush his manly heart?

Even now his hair has faded
And blossomed for the grave;
Yet I can see within him,
Traits learned while a slave.

Why didn't you enslave the women,
And let their virtue live?
Slavery! thou wast so cruel,
How can the women forgive?

Women as pure as dewdrops,
As a baby at its birth;
But slavery's ravishing passion
Crushed their virtue to the earth.

Mother didn't finish the story;
Her sons began to pine.
She pressed them to her bosom;
God said, "Vengeance is mine."

I did not begin this story
To enrage your little heart;
I thought the cruelties of slavery
To you I would impart.

And if you would take vengeance
The debt life couldn't pay,
God will judge them rightly
On resurrection day.

WAVE ON THOU FLAG.

Wave on, wave on the air,
O, flag that we have bought!
Stars and stripes for unity
Tells for what we fought.

Fade thou not by rain,
May whirlwinds passing by,
Not dash thee into tatters;
But leave thee in the sky.

Stand firmly thou mast pole,
On which the flag doth wave;
Many who performed that duty
Are lying in the grave.

Farewell thou flag, wave on,
Perform thy duty well;
Wave gently o'er the burial place
Of those who fought and fell.

SEEKING HER BOY.

On a battle field, when the smoke had cleared away,
I saw a woman strolling among the dead;
'Twas a mother whose hair had faded gray,
Now and then she'd stoop and raise a soldier's head.

She was seeking for her boy, her only pride,
Who as a soldier had been taken from his home;
She'd heard that he had fallen in the fray
And had come to bear his body to the tomb.

She reached the place where raged the thickest fray,
The dead were lying thick upon the ground;
It was there I saw the mother kneel to pray
For her loving boy had not yet been found.

From the ground with trembling form she rose,
The tears were falling freely from her eyes;
With folded arms toward sweet heaven she gazed:
"Oh, where's my boy!" with throbbing voice she cries.

Soon she saw a form lying in the gore;
She knew it was the body of her own.
Like a streak of lightning to the form she tore,
Around his neck her arms were quickly thrown.

She raised his head, his blood-stained lips to kiss,
In his forehead she saw the bullet's gaping wound
Too weak, she could not gaze on this;
She gives a cry, sinks helpless to the ground.

I watch at length to see the mother rise,
She did not seem to raise her hoary head;
Nearing, I found the mother by his side,
Still clinging to his neck, though she was dead.

MEMORY OF LINCOLN AND THE YANKEES.

Among the dear old friends we darkies cherish
Within the highest portals of our hearts,
The name that sounds as dear as dear old mother's
Is the Yankees' name, and from us it will never part.

When first I heard of Lincoln and the Yankee
My heart sprang to the zenith of its joy;
In this heart of mine it quickly nestled,
My love for it no force can quite destroy.

Lord, while these rolling waves of time and pleasure
Dash against their sacred nestling place,
With Thy powerful hand stay it and guide us,
Let nothing from our heart these names erase.

Great! great! is the debt we darkies owe them,
A debt no hand but Thine can ever pay;
Lord bless and from all danger guide them,
Let nothing from our hearts these names erase.

O! ye men that fought and are still living,
In whose veins the Yankee blood holds sway;
In our hearts for thee there lives a kindness
That will not be erased till judgment day.

Ye mortals who lie in graves and trenches,
Who fell to free this helpless negro race;
No mortal's name like thine do we reverence,
Within our hearts thou hast a sacred place.

I do not wish to call your souls from heaven,
But could I call your bodies from the ground;
On earth thou might live in peace for ages
With sweetest oil I'd daily balm your wounds.

To you O, ye dear and happy mothers!
Thou whom the Northern race hast freed;
Grasp your loving infant from the cradle,
Tell them of the Yankees blessed deed.

THE DEATH OF HECTOR.

I will not attempt the task
  Of the Iliad to relate;
But I will tell of Hector
  And how he met his fate.

The Trojan war was over
  And with glowing chariot wheels,
The Greeks were driving madly
  The Trojans from the field.

The Trojans fled for safety
  To a city they had planned;
And they heard the voice of Priam
  Who upon the wall did stand.

Crying, "Wanderer throw wide the gate
  Unless this day the fleeing Trojans
Will meet their certain fate."

The wanderer sprang to the gate
  And opened it at Priam's command,
And all of them entered with safety;
  But Hector on the outside did stand.

He stood in mad confusion
With fury in his eye;
Saying, "This day I shall meet Achilles,
Though I be doomed to die."

But his aged father saw him,
Who was standing on the walls;
With withered hands he beats his breast,
With feeble lips he calls.

Hector, Oh Hector, my boy, please enter,
Save us from grievous woes."
But angry Hector would not hearken
Then the gate was closed.

He viewed the army coming
Like a whirlwind mixed with leaves,
And great Achilles secretly leads
Drawn by white foaming steeds.

Their chariot wheels glowing with fire.
Look! Hector meets their eyes
And they all rushed towards him
As racers towards a prize.

But Achilles' horses being swiftest
The race he seems to gain,
And hand to hand in battle
Hector in the dust was slain.

And after they had killed him—
The most brutal scene of all,
Achilles fastened him to his chariot,
Dragging thrice around the wall.

A DRUNKEN A.B.

One cold wet winter evening,
I was making for my home,
  I passed a drunkard lying in the mire;
The sleet was falling fast
And my heart for him was moved;
  I thought it best to aid him to the fire.

Then from the ground I raised him,
Bore him struggling to my home,
  Which was a little distance from the place;
And when my home I entered
And the light had shone around,
  I was attracted by the beauty of his face.

A fair young man just in his prime
Who wore a classic brow;
  The rays of light were gleaming from his eyes,
On his vest there was a medal
With the signature to show
  That in college he had won it as a prize.

Soon he was sleeping soundly
In a chair before the fire,
  Then from his breast the medal I took and read.
I saw he was an A.B.
And the poet of his class,
  An honest valedictorian the medal said.

T'was then my soul was lightened
As I gazed into his face,
I knew it was a genius I had found;
I thought who threw the arrow
That had pierced his manly heart,
And brought the noble victim to the ground.

Well, at first I deemed it rum
That had brought him to this state,
And then I thought what caused him first to drink;
Then he was sleeping soundly
And myself I did not know
Through the night the cause I could only think.

But next morning soon I rose
And his breakfast was prepared,
To have him dine with us I thought a treat:
To him we were a stranger
And at first he did refuse;
But at last we prevailed with him to eat.

Around our family table,
He was seated at the head,
And while he ate, our hearts did eager yearn;
We knew he was a genius
That had fallen to this state,
And much—the cause—we all desired to learn.

I told him where I found him
And his face began to change;
I asked him what had brought him to this state;
While the tears were falling fast,
"It was Mary," he replied;
This story then to me he did relate:

"After I finished college,
I was doing fairly well;
In Chicago I was cashier of a bank;
But one day there came a letter
From the girl that had my heart,
It was an arrow! Oh, it pierced me and I sank!

T'was from my youth, yea childhood,
That this girl had won my heart,
Before our God she promised to be mine:
But when the time for invitations
To our comrades should be sent;
In this letter the vow she did decline.

I'll never forget the day,
Yea, time can never erase
The hour when the letter I did receive;
At first I was dumbfounded
And it seemed my heart would break;
But somehow the message I could not believe.

I was standing at my window
When the letter came to hand;
I knew the man to whom I was dealing chang-;
I tried to bear it bravely,
But then all could plainly see
That with me there was something going strange.

The boy that brought the letter
Stood gazing into my face;
I bade him go, the answer not to wait;
I read the letter over,
Mused a moment to myself;
Tonight I'll call and make the matter straight.

Each moment seemed an hour,
I thought night would never come;
My assistant then I called to take my place;
Then from the bank I darted
And I hastened to her home;
I wanted just to gaze into her face.

She was standing by the window
And she saw me as I came;
She felt her guilt and to a closet fled;
At the door her servant met me,
Being instructed what to say,
"There's no one here but me," he quickly said.

Well I knew it was false,
But I knew not what to do;
  Had I the means, death might have been my fate.
But at last I departed,
Though I knew well she was there;
  I had seen her when I entered through the gate.

Back to my home I struggled,
There I sat in deepest grief
  Trying in vain to pass the time away;
Of course it was then evening
And I'd go again at night,
  A moment then to me did seem a day.

Sometimes it would seem too hard,
But some way the grief I bore;
  I called again before the sun went down.
But to be deceived again;
She had taken the early train,
  With my heart she'd departed from the town.

At the door her mother met me
  And the story she did tell;
It was then the arrow stung me
  And you found me where I fell.

Then I did not cease to love her,
  But with her desired to go;
For the way I prayed her mother;
  But she vowed she did not know.

All that night around her mother
  I wept and tried her heart to win;
On my knees I knelt and prayed her
  That for her daughter she might send.

True my mother did weep with me,
  From her the way I could not plead;
I decided then to seek her,
  Anywhere my mind should lead.

I left her house next morning
  And to the bank I went again;
But my heart was filled with sadness,
  It seemed that all my hope was vain.

That day I gave up my position
  Until the next ensuing year,
For my heart was stolen from me
  And I have sought it far and near.

Then I told my friend the story
  And he too, wept when he did hear;
Then he gave to me some brandy,
  He said my grief he would help to bear.

Since that day I've sadly wondered,
If my lover I could find,
Since that day the thirsting spirit
To the brandy seems to bind.

Eight months today I've not returned,
Neither has she, this letter said;
And since that day I've been wondering
If the girl I loved is dead.

ENVY.

In a flower garden beautiful and tall,
Stood a bloomed lily above them all;
The lily was slender made,
Yet a humming bird stooped for shade.
Evening came, it had its rest,
Saying, "In this blossom I'll build my nest;
In this blossom my love will lie,
And I will dwell here till I die."
Another bird saw him content;
Asked to build, she gave consent.
So on one blossom build them all;
Blown by a zephyr it breaks and falls.
The mother bird returned and found
Her nest and blossom on the ground.
To the heart of a maiden tender and sweet,
The heart of a lover went forth to meet;
To another lover the maid seemed sweet,
By the maids consent he leaps to meet;
To one sweetheart clings them all,
They were too many and had to fall.
The loving maid turned around
And found the lovers upon the ground.

A LECTURE.

I was gointer make a speech;
  But yer all began to frown;
Dats what I say about yer darkies
  Yer tri to hold each uder down.

I am glad you aint de master,
  De one dat sot beyond der skies,
Ef I wasn't ouah boy or gal
  I am sure that I could never rise

Tom's scard Dick will get er ofis;
  Dick's scard Henry ul git er prize.
Dats why we don't rise any faster,
  We've got ourselves to organize.

THE GIRL AND THE BIRDS.

A little girl with tender hands
Went with the birds to play;
The little birds with golden wings
Then swiftly flew away.

Pray leave me not, oh little birds!
Do stay with me I pray;
I did not mean to do you harm
With you I came to play.

The little bird sailed on the air,
Would not her calling heed,
But gave a flutter of their wings
So to increase their speed.

The earth in wheeling on her course,
Giving a mighty hum,
Said, "Do not cry my little one
They to the ground must come."

For to my sceptre all must bow,
The wicked and the good;
I have the key to the great store
From which they get their food.

SUMMER IS GONE.

Sweet summer is gone,
I stand in ice and sleet;
Where is thy storehouse,
Tell me that I may seek.

I turn to the woods,
That was once an arbor green;
Nothing now but (bare) trees
And the brown leaves are seen.

The grass on which I lay
In the warm summer glow,
I look, and lo! 'tis now
A sheet of ice and snow.

THE END OF DAY.

When day's dusty journey 's run,
  Laborers fill the homeward path;
The world worn out by toil and sun,
  In dewy mist must take a bath.

Birds unto their nests will fly,
  Crickets to their hearthplace creep;
Worldly cares are laid aside,
  Man too takes a bath in sleep.

Whatever's bent in the glowing sun,
  When Nature bathes, it will arise;
Withered corn blades will unroll,
  All things new will greet our eyes

THE EVENING.

The sun is sinking o'er the hills,
  Casting its gold on earth;
Young children in the harvest fields
  Hail it with joy and mirth.

For often through the glowing day,
  They gazed up with a frown;
And wondered in their little hearts,
  Why it would not hasten down.

The Master seeing the fiery ball
  Hiding its rays of light,
He gives His signal as to say:
  "Cease laboring for the night."

Children under a master's rod
  Who are toiling all the day,
Hear the sound of the evening bell
  And skip homeward on their way.

AFRICA'S CRY.

From the land of Africa
Comes a faint cry,
"Send us the gospel,
In ignorance we die."

Dying unconscious
Of a heavenly home,
We know not the Saviour
What will be our doom?

Send us a teacher,
Who will show us the way.
We know not the law,
How can we obey?

Come to us quickly,
We have thrown wide the gate;
Millions of us
Do anxiously wait.

THE STARS.

Tell me, oh Star, art thou a jewel,
  Shining in the sky so bright;
Or art thou a little lantern,
  Hung from Heaven to give us light.

Often when I am alone
  And think no one is nigh,
I glance into the heavens,
  And catch your little eye.

I do not know your mission,
  That none doth understand;
But I know if thou could'st do so,
  Thou would'st tell me tales of man.

Some men are so foolish,
  There's no eye but their own,
And steal out in the darkness
  Where their deeds of vice are sown.

Oh Star, I wish thou had'st a voice,
  To reach to the uttermost dell;
Where men would commit their evils,
  Would whisper, and say "I'll tell."

Oh, if thou could only talk,
Many wonders thou would'st tell;
Thou that saw within the walk,
The trap in which the purest fell.
All mankind feel quite free,
When they think no one can see;
And cease to care how slack they wal'
Oh, if thou could only talk!
If thou that shed the faintest beam,
Could only tell what thou hast seen
It would be enough.

NOTHING TO DO.

The fields are white,
  The laborers are few;
Yet say the idle,
  There's nothing to do.

Jails are crowded,
  In Sunday Schools few;
We still complain
  There's nothing to do.

Drunkards are dying,
  Your sons, it is true;
Mothers' arms folded,
  With nothing to do.

Heathen are dying,
  Their blood falls on you;
How can you people
  Find nothing to do?

SATAN.

Satan's a robber,
He works day and night;
Go where you may,
He's always in sight.

Go to your closet,
And kneel down in prayer;
You need not be frightened;
For Satan's not there.

He lurks around poverty,
He lurks around gold;
He's always on duty,
Seeking a soul.

LIFE'S ROAD.

With joy I plod life's weary road,
Sometimes free, then with a load;
The cares I gather through the day
At night my banjo will drive away.

If life comes sweet, I'll only smile
Because it will please me well.
If life comes bitter, I'll only frown
And you can never tell.

I never grieve o'er past mistakes
Made through the previous day;
I will from them a lesson take
And go plodding on life's way.

Sometimes you see me plodding
And judge I'm doing well;
But the care that's moving in my heart
No tongue can ever tell.

THE SIGNS OF DEATH.

When yer hear at night de ole milch cow a lowin'
An' der houn dogs howling out der mornful sound,
I tell yer now yer better giter ready,
Dey's guinter plant some boudy in de ground.

You neanter believe in sines unless yer wantir,
But some des morns you'll wake up in suprize
An' if dey come a howling when I'm sleeping,
I'll tell yer now dis darkey am gointer rize.

An' if der's any doubt of being ready,
On my knees I'm gointer make it strate;
You may laf an' say dat darkey's scary,
I am like er rabbit, I can not trust mistake.

It may not be for me de dogs er howling,
But when dey howl, my path I'm gointer sweep;
I am not agoin to bed no moer dat eavning,
Death shant come and find dis darkey sleep.

Ders lot ov learned people talking bully,
An' saying der's nothing in de sign,
But if they come around me with their culture,
I am just er goin' ter tell dem da'er lyin'.

I don't care to listen to their lectures,
  Cos dey's just tryin' to show off smart;
There aint noboudy, no matter how he's cultured,
  Dats got de signs er' wiped clear from his hart.

Cultur' don't take from man his habits,
  It only smears them over with a stain;
Caus' he's cultured, he's not an angel,
  Dem same old traits is learking still widin.

CLASSES.

The world is divided in many classes,
All deny being of the masses;
Life is complex, whom may I believe?
All the world seeks to deceive.

Society is artificial, I find
When I see what draws the line,
Men with honor and much estate
Compose the class we all call great.

One class is made by color line,
One by those who dress fine,
Some are made by the family tree,
All painting and striving to seem to be.

FORTUNE'S WHEEL.

Daily the wheel of Fortune is turned,
Daily they award the prize;
But somehow they never call my name,
I've labored many years,
And the thing that causes me tears,
Always I've returned just as I came.

Often it seems too hard,
I decide no more to try;
It seems as though there is no prize for me,
Then a spark of hope will blaze,
And new courage it will raise,
And again among the throng I'll be.

Always it won't be this way,
Very soon will come my day,
When the fortune wheel will be justly turned,
Just as it makes its round,
Yes, my name will then be found,
And I'll get the prize for which I yearned.

SHOW YOUR LOVE.

If you love me show it now,
  Wait not till I've passed away,
And lying cold in yonder grave,
  I can not hear then what you say.

If a wreath await my death,
  One green leaf now give to me;
All thy sweet sayings say them now,
  Pray let me hear them while I live.

If the half had been made known,
  That was said on burial dav,
Many that fainted would have risen,
  And bounded on the upward way.

In th' book that tells of the warrior's glory,
  For the private soldier pray write a line;
Ah, if he had been a coward
  How could the captain have been sublime?

True the Commander should be honored,
  Without him there's nothing done;
But where the soldiers were not willing,
  I have never seen a victory won.

Ye men of wealth and highest honor,
All who sit in a honored sphere;
Gaze not on your brawny arm,
Think of th' weak who put you there.

MEMORY OF THE OLD TIMES.

When the bygone days come rushing to my memory,
Ah, those good old days I spent while but a boy!
Many a picture it brings that causes a tinge of sadness,
Yet somehow my heart is filled with magic joy;
I can view myself going strolling through the corn field,
Gazing on the corn silks and the tassels gray;
Through the woodland 'till at last I reached the brooklet,
There for minnows I would fish 'till close of day

But those good old days have gone and years of sadness
Have wrapped themselves around that happy lad;
And no more at day to wander through the woodland,
And no more at night around my dear old dad.

I remember well how in the early springtime,
When the meadow and the orchard were in bloom;
How John and I'd go bounding o'er the hillside,
Close of eve when time to bring the cattle home;

I speak of John, but he too has left me;
And his body lying mouldering in the clay,
And I gaze around to see my boyhood comrades,
But they like my youth from me have passed away.

My dear old friends have gone, and years of sadness
Have wrapped themselves around that happy lad;
And no more at day to wander with my comrades,
No more at night around my dear old dad.

DON'T LAUGH, BOYS!

A colored, gray haired, feeble man
  Came tottering down the street;
Was tackled by some happy youths
  That he by chance did meet.

His hands were trembling on his cane,
  He raised his hoary head;
With them he was not angry,
  As with a trembling voice he said:

"Don't laugh, boys, at this old form,
  I think I am doing well;
What I went through in slavery
  No tongue can ever tell..

"I had no chance when I was young,
  I was working for master then;
But now my boys you're free,
  Make out of yourselves men.

"And when you meet an old grav-haired man
  Struggling along as I;
Don't trouble him, for he loves you,
  Politely pass him by."

ABOUT DE PUTY GALS.

When I was a little feloah,
A sprying around de gals,
De yaloah gals wus all a guying din;
Goodness dey was triflin,
But uv course they didn't care,
Dey were serten-dey cud get de best uv men.

True dey were a rarety
And we darkies didn't know,
We thot it bes just'r take her in;
She knew dat we'ers beholding
And treated us as dey pleased;
We poor fools wud sit en fold our arms en grin.

An' dat same old adage,
Sum are clingin to it yet,
An trien ter reason in de same old way,
Because dey's kinder puty
Dey can do just as dey pleased,
Den wid de biggest darkies hold er sway.

I'll tell yer now, you're foolish,
Dem kinder days has passed;
Features wid us now don' cut no shine,

You've got to be a lady
In de fullest uv de word—
You have got to be de pure and genuine.

I'll tell yer puty darkeys
Who's reasoning in dat way,
I have a word wid you I'd like to give,
You had better git sum knoledge
In dat cocoanut uv yourn;
Don't, by yoursef furever yur haf tir live.

Cos, honn'y, you need not prize your face,
You ain't no rarety in de race;
Der uster be a time
When de yallar gal helt the line,
But now, dere's plenty in de race.

MY SONG.

Why was I born if this ends all,
All that I will ever be;
To feel a spirit that seems divine
And no chance to let it free?

Poor, unfortunate seems my part,
Drifting on poverty's sea;
The chains of need have bound me fast,
Oh would that I were free!

Daily I'm struggling for the shore,
But the sea is vast and wide;
And when I stop to sing my lays,
I'm threatened by the tide.

But if these rugged lays I've sung,
Should cause some heart to move;
And should bring to me sweet freedom,
How could I them but love.

Accept these lays to you I've given
As a token of my art;
Jingling though they may seem to be,
Remember 'tis but a start.

OUR PICNIC.

In fullest joy and richest pleasure,
Under the shade, lying on the grass;
Picnic tables on the ground before us,
Our day with Pean did swiftly pass.

We found a spring by a rippling stream,
Gushing water fresh and cool;
We must have found what De Leon sought,
A balm for old age within a pool.

Children like lambs ran over the woodland,
Worldly cares were chased away;
Their voices like wild nymphs ringing,
Old age felt quite young to day.

Reaching the arbor dark with shade,
Joy threw aside her rustic door;
We entered in with hail of song,
All forgot that we were poor.

We turned around, lingering looked,
Going home at the close of day;
Pean stood weeping in the door,
Crying and beckoning for us to stay.

EDITH.

In the park under a mossy tree,
  Upon a rustic seat,
In the evening when the sun was low,
  Edith and I would meet.

It was on this seat three years ago
  I gently took her hand;
And gazed into her smiling face,
  No sweeter in the land.

But now she is dead and passed away,
  I from my labor stroll;
I have no one to meet me there,
  I have no hand to hold.

But some sweet day, when my work is done
  I'll stroll to another place,
Where I will again take Edith's hand,
  And gaze in her smiling face.

Roll round, sweet day, and bear me up
  To the heaven above,
Where I will again see Edith's face,
  And rest with her, my love.

ODE TO LOVE.

Love! O passion! O woman!
  Return what thou hast stole:
Ambition, heart, and treasure,
  O free the weary soul.
Loose thy suffering victim,
  Unbar the prison door;
Call them back that weary,
  Let them live once more.
Why mock your helpless victim?
  Loose your galling chain;
To many thou givest pleasure,
  To others thou givest pain.
Thy hypnotizing power,
  Over many holds a sway;
To him it seems a magnet,
  It draws his soul away.
Many thou found were happy,
  In society held a place;
Thou hypnotized and led them
  To shame and sad disgrace.

HEROD'S SLAUGHTER OF THE BABES

It was a decree of Herod,
Caused mothers to run wild;
He sent soldiers from his palace,
To kill each young male child.

To kill the babe, the mother's hope:
To mothers it didn't seem right;
The mothers with their babies,
For refuge took their flight.

One mother fled for refuge
To a cave within the ground;
To all it was suspicious;
By a soldier it was found.

Looking in at the open door,
As a bird upon its nest,
He saw a frightened mother,
With a babe pressed to her breast.

"What seek ye?" cried the mother,
With a voice both faint and wild;
"I am on a duty from Herod,
To kill each young male child!"

"Oh! spare my child!" cried the mother;
"I pray thee let it live;
If life's what thou seek'st,
Take mine, I'll freely give!"

"It's not your's, it's the babe's,
My duty I must perform."
He reaches his hand towards her,
To take the babe from her arm.

Back to the corner she fled,
He rushed like a wild bear;
As a wolf on a lamb, he seized
And from her bosom tore.

The mother to save her babe
Bounds like a flying dart.
Too late! he unsheathed his blade
And pierced it through its heart.

The mother viewing the horrible scene,
Sinks breathless upon the floor;
He throws the babe by her side,
And steps from the earthen door.

The mother dying upon the ground,
Once from death did awake;
Saw her struggling baby lying
With its arms outstretched to take.

Quick as lightning her babe she grasped,
Her lips pressed to its wound;
They both gave up life's precious breath,
Sinking dead upon the ground.

A spirit went wafting through the sky
With a babe upon its breast;
In the cave their corpses are seen
But their souls are in heaven at rest.

AMBITION.

The world is a race course;
Man is a charioteer;
In him there is a soul;
Ambition is the steed
By which he is drawn,
Over which he seems to have
No control.

Each day we speed on the race,
Ambition still our steed,
Regardless of the soul
And heaven the goal;
Toward riches and honor
We speed.

Ambition, thou most fiery steed,
  Remember thou drawest a soul;
For riches and honor there is no prize
  Heaven is the only goal.

Be mindful thou, O charioteer!
  Ride careful, keep your place,
Let riches nor honor tempt thee
  And you will gain the race.

A VIEW OF CHILDHOOD.

I love to think what joy I've had,
When I was a boy, a playful lad;
I couldn't appreciate it then,
I had not felt this world of sin.

No cares were then upon my mind,
Happy and playful all the time;
Just think of the many happy hours,
That I roved through woods and flowers.

How I'd bound around at night,
Catching the bug that flashed a light;
Next morning when the sun would rise,
I'd begin to chase the butterflies.

I can see myself creeping to a flower,
Where a butterfly has lit to sip;
Now it seems I almost have him,
But from my fingers he doth slip.

He fleeing away to another flower,
I stand and gaze to see him light;
Now again I creep to catch him,
But he sees me and takes a flight.

As I chase him from flower to flower,
Many others meet my eye;
Some that do not seem so scary,
To catch the others I will try.

There, I see one on that flower,
His head deep in the blossom fold;
Now it seems as tho' I have him,
And by his silky wings I hold.

REASON, SAD WORLD.

Ye proud and merry world,
  Reason with me I pray;
Why weary for the things
  That soon shall pass away?
Knowing that soon thou'll die,
  And on earth shall be no more,
Then what value will be to you,
  The wealth you have in store?
Dost thou believe in God,
  Of whom so much thou hast heard?
If so, why dost thou weary,
  Why not trust then to His word?
Knowest thou that life and honor
  And the wealth of sea and land,
And all for which thou longest,
  He holdeth in His hand?
Then why not for true life
  And all that thou dost need,
Beseech it from our God,
  Cease to man to plead?
All His promises are true,
  Yea, more than we have heard;
And this thou too would'st see,

Should you swing out on His word.
Let us first Heaven seek;
Of all, sweet Heaven is best,
And God has in His word
Promised to give the rest.
Sad world, now cease your pining,
Warriors, cease your strife;
Strive not for honor nor wealth,
But seek eternal life.

THE WEALTHY NIGGER.

One day along de road I's strolling,
Over my circumstances scoling;
I saw a roll of money in de san,
At first de money blinded me,
Till I heard a voice behind me,
Den wid de money to my home I ran.

Dis black nigger am welthy, boys, at last;
You ought to see de raising uv the hat when I pass;
Dis black nigger don't seem so funny
Since dey's found he's got de money,
And dem same old niggers am glad now to call me
boss.

Der were some yaller darkies in de place where I's
born,
Dey uster say I's smutty. Oh how dey uster scorn!
They uster have dey socials, dey uster have der teays,
Dey uster have der walking for der cake;
But dis nigger dey always slighted
And to none I was invited,
Dey treated me as do I was a snake.

Dis black nigger am welthy, boys, at last;
You ought to see dem yaller niggers bowin' when I pass;
Dis black nigger don't seem so funny
Since dey's found I's got de money,
And dem same old niggers am glad now to call me boss.

I had a half brother and sister in de place where I's born,
Both of dem was yaller, dis black'un dey uster scorn;
But when dey heard I had returned
Wid de money for to burn,
Dey both on me did cast a wishful eye.
Uv course dey uster scorn me,
But now dey love to own me,
Dey cry, "Dar go my brudder," when I pass.

Dis black nigger am welthy, boys, at last;
You outer see my brudder an sister grinnin when I pass;
Der black brudder don't seem so funny
Since dey's found he's got de money,
And dem same old niggers am glad now to call me boss.

Der were some Irish merchants in de place where
I's born,
An when I'd pass der building, how dem clerks ud
scorn;
But when dey found I'd returned
Wid de money for to burn,
Dey'd ask me in so nicely whin I'd pass,
Do I had not changed my colour;
But dey found I had de dollar,
And de dollar toes de line to any class.

Dis black nigger am welthy, boys, at last;
Oh how dem merchants call me when I pass.
Dis black nigger don't seem so funny
Since dey's found I's got de money,
And dem same old merchants am glad now to call
me boss.

THE BOY'S OPPORTUNITY.

Hail, happy youth, in your prime,
Be up and doing, waste not your time;
Fast is coming on the day,
You'll wish the time you waste away.

True, I know you are a boy,
I do not care to stop your joy,
But very soon you'll be a man
And for yourself you'll have to plan.

These wasted days and foolish cares
You'll think of them again in tears;
When misfortune drives you mad
You'll wish the time you once have had.

But no matter how you may yearn,
Time once spent will not return;
Now, my boys, your minds are free
Think of the man you hope to be.

Study hard, your pennies save,
Always truthful, ever brave;
And when a man you come to be,
You'll think of what was said by me.

"NO USE IN SIGNS."

Tain't no usen being skar'd of congurs,
E'n lettin black cats turn ur back;
Jest go'n er bout yuh bisnes,
An let the congers hav yer track.

Frida' aint no wus dan Monday,
Ez fur ez luck is consern;
Ef yuh han ich, don't spit in it:
Wont git nusin but what's u'rn.

Ef yuh nose ich, no 'un comin,
Ef yuh foot ich, yer goin no wher;
U'can let wurms crall al'over you
Den you 'll get nuthin new to ware.

Cos yo hav a little lernin
Don't sit in try ter figer rich;
Jes git yer spade an shuvel
An go trotin' long toder ditch.

Win yer feel a little happy,
Don't think of al de sorros yer had
Cos yer eye is trembling a little,
Dats no sine yer goin ter get mad.

Cos de middle toe iz longer den de big on,
  Don't yer think gwine ter rule;
Kase my hair gro' on my forehead,
  Yer neanter take me fur a fool.

I am gointer sing sum in der monin,
  See if de haks catch me before night;
Ef da do don't yer wury,
  Jest say, "I bet day had ter fite."

THE MEMORY OF FRANCES WILLARD.

Around the glowing fireside of the nation,
There's a vacant chair no one can ever fill;
Death came and stole from it a Temperance mother,
Yet in Heaven she lives an angel still.
To all she seemed a pure unfolding lily,
On which no eye had ever found a stain;
She stood till death, the surest reaper,
Came to gather in his choicest grain.

CHORUS.

Dearest mother, gone thou art,
Left us with a breaking heart.
To sweet Heaven thou art conveyed,
Show us the star that thou hast made,
That thy dear friends at night may see
The silver rays that gleam from thee.

Upon the parlor wall of our nation,
Hangs a picture in a sacred place;
She was a tender friend to the drunkard,
All admire the beauty of her face.
'Tis a picture of dear old Mother Willard,
A mother to the drunkard and to all;
She was tenderly watching over the fallen
When she heard the loving Savior call.

CHORUS.

In the tender heart of all the nation
There's a place no one can ever fill;
A place for one who's living now in Heaven,
For her the lamp of love is burning still.
From the Union there's gone a loving mother,
For her our hearts in sorrow will ever pine;
May peace be unto her dear old comrades,
May joy pour out to them the richest wine

CHORUS.

I'LL ENTER THE SALOON NO MORE

Daily we drop in the treasure,
But it never reaches its height;
And when we search for the reason,
We find it Saturday night.

Then we find them there in multitudes,
Spending in various ways;
I'll invite you to the bar-room
That you in the window may gaze.

There you'll see Samuel Brown,
Who earns a dollar per day;
And for the cursed rum cup,
He is giving it all away.

At home his wife and children
Have earned whatever they could,
And are waiting by the fire
To receive their Sunday's food.

His wife is somewhat frightened,
The clock has long struck ten;
She lays aside her baby
To bring her Samuel in.

She laid aside her baby
And pursued the journey once more,
She didn't make any inquiries
Till she reached the grocery store.

Then she asked the merchant
If he had seen her Sam.
He said, "He's gone to the bar-room
To get his Sunday's dram."

Then to the saloon she hastened,
Entered in at the open door;
There she saw her husband
Lying drunk upon the floor.

By his side she sat and wept,
When he from sleep did wake,
And heard his baby crying
As tho' its heart would break.

When he saw them weeping,
He rose to his feet and swore,
For the sake of wife and baby
He would enter the saloon no more.

UNKER ISRAEL.

De people calls me a kungrer
Cos I do some simple tricks,
Cos I'se got a lucky black cat bone;
Kant gedder no rutes to make tea wid
Less dey talk'in about dat;
Da say I'se got a ball er blue load stone.

No madder what I do noble—
Makes no diffens how 'es done—
Yer nebber hear dem praisen' ob mi brain;
Lack when I married Anlyzzer,
Jest cos she had some sense
Deys' sayn' dat I got her wid some skeme.

Let sometin' happen to de nabers,
Jes let one of dem get sick,
Fer it old Israel got ter bear de blame;
Cos dey see me wid dis bull eye
An' er rabbit foot er two,
Dey put eberthing on me dat is mean.

Some time da talk so scandlus
Dat it gits me rite upset,

'N, 'speshly when I notice what dey say,
I'se a notion takin' dis cat bone,
An' eberthing dat I got,
'N lettin' de people see me thro' dem away.

Den I gedder dem tergedder,
'N when I git dem in er pile
I gin ter think ob de comin' needy day,
'N I no what dey'll do fer me;
I git rite mad wid myself
Erbout worryin' ober what de people say.

Cos when I look on dis loadstone,
An' dis bull eye dat I got,
Kan't help de tears from comin' in my eye;
Cos once when de worl' was aginst me,
An' me frens all turn der backs,
Dis bull eye an' de loadstone stud rite by.

Call me kungrer jest much as yer wanter,
Yer can't take no feck on me,
Aint shame to own de things dat brought me
through;
Talk erbout yer mudder's teachin',
But what dese done fer me
Es' much as eny mudder can eber do.

Wid dis bone I uster mark de path
Dat run from ole Massa's dor,
Eber mornin' when he come out had ter cross;
Put mi bull eye in mi pocket
'N done jest like I pleased—
U'der seen me u'der thot I was de boss.

'N ole Massa couldn't cross dat mark
'Dout a smile comin' on his face,
Ter talk wid me old Massa seemed rite proud;
I made eberbody lub me,
An' as long as I stayed dare
Ole Massa neber hit one ob de crowd.

I kep ole Massa from beatin'
Mos' all de wimmen folks;
Sum time I wuk a few tricks fer de men,
Dey couldn't git me do for nuthin',
Cudn't git me ter move a peg,
Fer eber trick dey hadder bring er hen.

When eber I'd go out cortin',
I'd rub de loadstone on mi han',
Den I'd put er rabbit foot in mi shoo;
No houn dog on urf cud track me,
'N cud make anybody love,
'N when I met de gurls dis ways I'de doo—

Make out like I's glad ter see dem,
'N I'd grab hol' ob der han',
I'd be rubbin' de loadstone on um all de time;
Un un, honey, no use scornin',
Neanter be turnin' up yer nose,
If I want youh I kin easy made yer mine.

ODE TO CONSCIENCE.

O guilty conscience, thou scourgest well!
Would'st thou give ease if I should tell
The crime committed o'er which I weep,
Though unsuspicioned, denies me sleep?
Come, law, and punish and let me rest,
Ease the guilty, aching breast.
Loose the innocent, set him free;
Take the convict, I am he.
No punishment can th' law impart
Equal to th' aching of a guilty heart.

TWO SPIRITS.

Two spirits are warring in my breast,
Each for the sway.
Each of me has made request—
Which to obey?

I'll obey the one that seems divine,
It came from heaven.
The other from this heart of mine
Must now be driven.

THE PARTING SOLDIERS.

Many gathered around the station
To bid the soldiers a sad good-bye,
Many a mother's heart was aching,
Many a lover was seen to cry.
But when the train rolled from the station,
Parting home words seemed quite strange;
Girls strolled home with other fellows—
Boys, there's going to be a change.
Another one will take your place,
He is going to beat you in the race,
Your room is all your lover will miss,
Another one she will hug and kiss.

In the night, around the fort,
When the kettledrum beats the roll,
Then she has another sport,
And in the moonlight takes a stroll.

The ring you placed upon her hand,
And wished it not to be removed,
She has given to another man—
False to you that girl has proved.

"Tip, tip, bum!" the drum I hear!
Face to the enemy! Never fear,
Soon Uncle Sam will set you free,
And sign your pension with his hand;
Just as we follow an old brass band
Thick as the flies around a 'lasses can,
They will follow thee, follow thee.

MY LONELY HOMESTEAD.

My good old home doesn't seem like it used to,
Since my dear old mother died.
The sunshine from it has passed away,
The old cot seems so lonely
Here I can no more reside.
The dear old form is resting 'neath the clay.

I remember well, how in the evening,
When from labor I'd return,
I'd hear the dear one singing as I neared;
When her room I'd enter,
How the lamp of love would burn;
A paradise to me my home appeared.

Hushed is the voice I used to hear,
There's no one sitting in the old arm chair,
My heart is filled with sadness, it is wrapped in gloom;
I can not bear to enter in her dear old room.

There's her Bible lying open on a table near,
By the Bible lies the glasses that she used to wear
She had just finished reading, when she fell asleep
Where Jesus said to Simon, "feed my sheep."

There's a half finished stocking she'd begun for me;
Here are all the knitting needles where they used
to be;
The spinning-wheel is standing where she sat for
years
Spinning out the cotton, humming away her cares.

On the wall there hangs her picture—though solemn,
not stern;
It seems to gaze upon me every way I turn;
But the kind and loving Savior, who knoweth best;
Hath freed her from her labor, called her home to
rest.

AN APPEAL.

An old man living near his master
Ever since he was made free,
Saw in him an evil spirit
That he thought should never be.

The old man's heart seemed to be breaking,
He had seen it several years,
It seemed he could not bear it longer,
He speaks with eyes half filled with tears:

"Tell me, massa, why yer scorn me,
Is it simply cose I'm free?
I's nebber tried ter hom yer,
Allas kind I's tried ter be.

"I'm same as I was when yer own me,
Whateber yer ask I try ter do;
Is it somethin' I's done?
Yer don't treat me as do I's one ob yo.

"True, I's glad I's got mer freedom—
Not semply do to 'scape yer rod—
I's glad ob it down in mer buzom,
Dis luv of freedom came from God.

"Truf, I know I's little ignorent,
But dis I make es er ernes' plee—
Sposen you 'ad been in my condition,
How'd you do if you's me?

"Dis, O massa, I pra do tell me,
I'll do as yer would if I can,
What I do is not fer spite work,
I's simply tryin' ter be er man.

"Yer know I's proven miself harmless,
I wouldn't hurt yer when I cud,
When you lef' your homestead wid me,
Did I not prove myself as good?

"Think when yer was off in battle,
Fiten fer de cause yer thought was rite,
How I toiled and fed yer fam'ly,
How I guarded dem safe at nite.

"Fiten ter keep me from mi freedom—
Dat, yer know, I noed full well—
In all ob dis was I not faithful?
If dis aint so I pra de tell.

"Tell me, when de war was ober,
What did my ole mistess say?
Did her say I tryed ter harm her?
Did I eber 'fuse ter oba?

"Den wont yer fam'ly for protection
Lef' as young lam's by mer side?
'N 'fore I'd let the hole urth harm em,
Massa, yer know I wud 'er died.

"I want yer ter think erbout dis madder,
Look de case rite straight through,
'N se fer yoursef whi u'nt treat me
De same as do I's one ob yo.

"I wanter stay on dis farm wid yer,
My arm dis great big fiel' did clur;
More dan dat, hur's my affection,
My mudder an' fader are buried hur.

"U'nt do less we kin in union,
I luve ter lib where der is love;
I wont stan' dis, do, much longer,
I 'speck it's best dat I would move."

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WHY SNEER AT TH' ERRORS OUR FATHERS MADE?

Why sneer at th' errors our fathers made?
Of their mistakes why's so much said?
To scorn these men is no way to do,
Their faults have been much help to you.

We see the man that walked sin's path;
We find he met fate's cruel wrath,
And then we know what path to take,
Therefore we gained by his mistake.

For who, after reading the Holy Book,
Would take the path Ananias took?
We learn the path to take or shun,
From those who lost and those who won.

For what is history read to day,
If not that we may learn the way?
And when I read of the early gloom,
I am glad I was not born so soon.

Now, when one falls before your eyes,
Extend your hand, help him to rise,
His falling may a warning be—
Suppose it had been made of thee?

VIRTUE ALONE CAN MAKE MEN GREAT.

In reading the history from Adam's time,
Studying the lives we call sublime,
So many I cross obscured by sin,
I find virtue alone can make great men.

We find so many once brilliant lights
To-day have vanished from our sight;
Tracing the cause, when I come to an end,
I find virtue alone can make great men.

I know a man whom no one feared,
Almost a sun his life appeared;
I see the sphere that he did own
Extremely darker for having shone.

When I see how clever the vice he did,
And finding that it could not be hid,
I say, as the Book with the holy seal:
Your sins, though covered, shall be revealed.

My son, I charge you from this very day,
Choose the path of virtue, it is the way;
Should you choose another, death is your fate,
For virtue alone can make men great.

TO HER THAT WEEPS.

Oh, beloved wife of the dear departed,
To thee I sing: be not broken-hearted,
The God that called thy loved one from thy side
Hath sent an angel o'er thy path to guide.

I know it's hard to give up one so dear,
To whom was trusted all thy love and care.
Death, my friend, is the common lot of all,
We must surrender freely to the call.

Weep no more, for thy loved one is at rest;
Expel the sorrow from thy aching breast;
Murmur not, for it is our Father's will,
He in love and mercy will keep thee still.

Go forth, oh song, in a strain loud and clear,
Soothe th' aching heart, dry up every tear,
And with thy cloak of love securely fold,
Pray that God her from all danger will hold.

HEATHEN LAND.

Across the ocean is a heathen land,
Hasten, brothers, and lend a hand;
Go as far as your feet can tread;
Tell them of the living God.

Let love of home stay thee no more,
Carry the Gospel from shore to shore,
'Till idolatry from them will flee,
'Till India and Africa will shout, "We are free."

Move on, my brothers, why stand you here?
Our Savior is with thee, why should you fear?
"Go preach my gospel, tell them of me,"
Thus says the Savior, "I am with thee."

BLAME NOT THE POET.

Blame not the poet who daily seeks the woods;
Call him not idle, thy verdict may be wrong,
For there he meets with nature face to face,
He hears her voice, to him it's song.

TO THE MEMORY OF W. W. BROWNE.

Listen, brethren, while I speak
  Of our dear old father Browne.
In vain another we may seek,
  Yet not another can be found.
No, not on this wide circled earth,
  Has a greater man received his birth.

A tender father, loved by all,
  How we miss his loving voice,
Then for his death our tears do fall.
  Still in his work we do rejoice,
Because it was so kind and free—
  A wonderful blessing it was to me.

A father whom our God did love,
  When He saw his work was done,
Called him to his home above
  To receive the great crown he had won.
Yes, though He called him from our sight,
  Still we behold his brilliant light.

How he toiled, and how he suffered;
  How the sweat ran from his face,
While he worked and prayed for wisdom
  That he might advance his race—
To teach them of a brother's care—
  A brother's burden how to share.

Whenever he heard the sick man's groan
  And the orphan's cry for bread,
He went with helping hand to loan—
  He said these people must be fed.
He gave his life for those distressed,
  Our God was pleased, his hand was blessed.

Farewell, fond spirit, and take thy rest;
  Thy voice on earth will sound no more;
We will obey thy last request,
  We will meet thee on the other shore,
There in perfect peace to dwell.
  Dear father Browne, farewell, farewell!

TO THE MEMORY OF W. W. BROWNE.

Dear father Browne, the great, the good,
The noble leader of our race,
With task complete, his spirit fled
To heaven, its final resting place.
There in peace it shall remain,
Wrapped away from care and pain,
His body 'neath sweet roses sleeping,
Around his grave his friends are weeping.

Weeping for one so dearly loved,
Too soon it seemed we had to part.
To see him hid beneath the clay,
Sharp sorrow fills the aching heart.
It seems I see the great form standing
O'er the mighty host commanding,
And with his outstretched, loving arm
Telling the people they must reform.

Think of the great work he has done;
Behold the great reformer's band,
Ten thousand marching to and fro
Seeking the helpless, lending a hand.
Gone! Thou hast not lived in vain,
Thy deeds are monuments of fame.
Thy name from earth shall never depart,
Kindness engraved it on the heart.

No more to meet us here on earth,
  But the noble impulses thou hast given
Will urge us on this mighty course
  Until we too are called to heaven.
'Neath the cold clods! Is it the last?
  No; the memory of the past,
As Bethlehem star the wise men led,
  So his light will lead us tho' he's dead.

DE 'SCURSION DAT YER RODE.

Do you remember, boys, last summer
  All dem 'scursions dat yer rode?
Do you remember, boys, der money yer thode away?
  Now de snow is fallin' fastly,
On yer feet der ain't no shoes.
  Don't yer wish yer had dat money, boys, ter day?

WHY SHOULD I DEPLORE?

Oh, why should I deplore,
  To have great wealth in store?
Haven't I health, food and shelter?
  What need hath man for more?

GOD BLESS THE SAILORS.

God bless the sailors brave to night,
  Out on the surging sea,
Who are fighting hard against the storm,
  Protecting you and me.

The lightnings flash, the thunder peals,
  The surging billows roll;
'Tis then the sailors' work begins,
  The boat they must control.

Oh, raging sea, why not be calm?
  Oh, lightning, thunder, cease;
Oh, mighty storm, why not be still?
  Oh, why not hold thy peace?

Lord, calm again this raging sea,
  If it's Thy holy will.
Pray let me hear Thy loving voice
  Say to the wind, be still.

GIB TER ME ER LOCK OB YER HAIR.

Honey, I'se gwine ter sail fer Cuba termorrer;
Gwine ter make dem Spaniards fly.
My lub fer you has filled my heart wid sorrer—
I'se come ter bid yer all good bye.

Now, honey, here's a present I wanter gib yer:
Take dis ring. Remember me, an' wear.
An' now I'm gwine ter ask ob you a token—
Gib ter me er lock ob yer hair.

Gib ter me er lock ob yer hair, hun,
Ter 'member yer when I'm gone.
Take dis ring. Remember me, an' wear.
An' now I'm guinter ask ob you a token—
Gib ter me er lock ob yer hair.

GOD BLESS OUR COUNTRY.

God bless our country, the land of the free;
Be with our rulers, whoever they be;
Protect the flag, and let it wave
Forever o'er free men, not th' slave.